



WINTER
2013-2014

SUGAR LAND TODAY

PUBLISHED BY THE CITY OF SUGAR LAND

SURFACE WATER NOW ON TAP



A new \$69 million surface water treatment plant, the City's largest capital investment project, is delivering clean water to Sugar Land residents. See the story on page 8.

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STAY
CONNECTED



TWO MAJOR PARKS & TRAILS PROJECTS

APPROVED

The bond election results are in; Sugar Land residents chose to fund two of three propositions. A new festival site and 128 acres of parkland along the Brazos River and an extensive hike and bike trail will be developed during the next several years. Read more on page 3.



On a recent trip to Boston, I was struck at how modern—and yet how historical—this American city is. Not only can you use a mobile app to navigate the subway, but you can also attend a baseball game in a stadium that opened in 1912 and visit the house from which Paul Revere set off on his famous midnight ride over 200 years ago. Remarkably, Bostonians have found a way to ensure their city endures—not for years, but for centuries—building a modern economic infrastructure earning the city recognition as one of the top technology and innovation hubs in the country without sacrificing their revolutionary history.

As a suburb, Sugar Land is vastly different from the metropolis of Boston, but I think we can still learn a lot from their experience—particularly, how do we preserve the character of our city while

also adapting to the changing realities in the world around us?

Sugar Land residents have established a robust vision for the future of our community in the Comprehensive Plan: a safe, beautiful, inclusive and environmentally responsible community that has great neighborhoods and outstanding cultural, educational and recreational opportunities; a regional business center of excellence with balanced development and redevelopment and a city in which residents take pride. To be successful at achieving this vision, we must continually incorporate it into our daily operations and ensure all of our planning documents are in alignment.

With that said, it is now time for us to update our Land Use Plan, which documents the land use policies that guide development within the City. In addition to better aligning it with the vision, we would also like to engage the community in considering many of the changing realities identified since the plan was last updated in 2004—such as shifts in demographics, evolving economic development practices, new mobility patterns and an increased desire among residents for creative places and housing choices.

Therefore, I would like to invite all residents to take part in a special six-part Land Use Forum beginning in early 2014 (see page 4 for details). The forum will be open to the public and feature renowned speakers and extensive community discussions. Residents will have the opportunity to explore a variety of topics, such as the impact of changing demographics on market trends and the benefits of mixed-use activity centers—both in terms of attracting employers and providing recreation and retail opportunities, the link between mobility and land use, the role of housing choices in a community and how a city can remain vibrant through redevelopment.

Though these are complex topics, it is my hope that you will take advantage of this opportunity to shape the future of our community. Just as Boston would not be the city it is today without their residents and leaders dreaming big and establishing a modern vision for their community, we know that an updated Land Use Plan will help ensure that Sugar Land remains a vibrant place to live, work, shop and play for years and decades to come.

Look ahead, and make your reservation for the annual State of the City, a partnership with the Fort Bend Chamber of Commerce that highlights the City's 2013 accomplishments and vision for the future.

The community is invited to attend the program on Friday, Jan. 24, from 7:30-9 a.m., at the Sugar Land Marriott, 16090 City Walk. Residents may register for the event at www.fortbendchamber.com.

City Goals

- Safest City in America
- Responsible City Government
- Strong Local Economy
- Great Place to Live
- Building Community

City Council

James A. Thompson
Mayor

Bridget R. Yeung
Mayor Pro Tem
Single Member District Two

Himesh Gandhi
At-Large Position One

Joe R. Zimmerman
At-Large Position Two

Steve R. Porter
Single Member District One

Amy L. Mitchell
Single Member District Three

Harish Jajoo
Single Member District Four

City Management

Allen Bogard
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Karen Daly
Assistant City Manager

Steve Griffith
Assistant City Manager

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Mike Goodrum
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Management Services

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SAVE THE DATE

STATE OF
THE CITY

Jan. 24

SUGAR LAND MAYOR AND AT-LARGE COUNCIL MEMBER ELECTION ~ MAY 2014

The official filing period for the May 10 City Council election begins Jan. 29 and continues through Feb. 28 at 5 p.m. The mayor and Council at-large position one and at-large position two will be on the ballot. Each position serves a two-year term.

To serve on City Council, individuals must be 21 years of age and a City resident

for at least one year before the election. Councilmembers may not hold other City offices and may not be employed by the City during the term of office or within two years thereafter. Candidate information packets with forms for filing may be obtained from the Office of the City Secretary in City Hall, 2700 Town Center Blvd. North, beginning on Dec. 16.

The spring issue of *Sugar Land Today* will contain candidate profiles and voting location information. Early voting in person begins April 28 and continues through May 6. For questions about the election process, call **281-275-2730**, email **ggundermann@sugarlandtx.gov** or visit **www.sugarlandtx.gov** and click on the "Election 2014" icon.

TWO MAJOR PARKS & TRAILS PROJECTS APPROVED



1

Brazos River Park, Phase II & Festival Site



2

Hike and Bike Trails & Pedestrian Bridges

Sugar Land residents approved \$31 million for two major new park projects in November. The projects include 128 acres of new parkland along the Brazos River with an adjacent festival site and a connecting network of nearly 10 miles of hike and bike trails and bridges. Voters opted against the use of property taxes to fund a future 65-acre major community park located at Chatham Avenue and Easton Avenue.

The passage of the two propositions reaffirms that residents believe the projects are important to Sugar Land's quality of life and economic prosperity. Parks and green spaces are important because they provide residents with places to be engaged in activities that encourage community interaction. They also provide a sense of place and offer essential life-enhancing

qualities that aid in the well-being of both the individual and the community.

"The City will begin working to identify an implementation strategy for the two projects approved by voters," said City Manager Allen Bogard. "The results of the bond election demonstrate the public's continued confidence in the City's strong and responsible financial stewardship. The City's sound fiscal management has resulted in a AAA bond rating from Standard & Poor's and Fitch, allowing us to finance these projects at very competitive rates."

The festival site will accommodate large-scale events like the City's annual Fourth of July celebration and other cultural and entertainment events that benefit the local economy. The

comprehensive network of hike and bike trails will connect existing trails throughout the City to address recreational and mobility needs. The projects should be completed within two and seven years.

The bond election was prompted by a lack of progress and reliable funding for parks projects that were desired by Sugar Land residents and identified through years of community input.

Approval of the two propositions confirmed that the public believed property tax was the appropriate funding method for the projects. Sugar Land continues to maintain an extremely low tax rate, one of the lowest in Texas. Funding quality of life projects with property tax was an important public policy issue for voters.

LAND USE FORUM SERIES ANNOUNCED

Residents are invited to participate in a series of important roundtable discussions in the City's upcoming Land Use Forum series that kicks off in January. Six presentations will explore the impact of changing demographics, housing choices, mixed-use activity centers, mobility and how a city can remain vibrant through redevelopment. Residents will have the opportunity to learn and provide important feedback to the City.

Dates for the first three topics have been set; all presentations begin at 6 p.m. and will be held at City Hall.

- **A Changing City: Demographics and the Marketplace** – Jan. 15
- **Attracting Employers to Sugar Land** – Jan. 29
- **Town Square and Beyond: Creating Places for the Community** – Feb. 12

Future Forums: dates to be announced later.

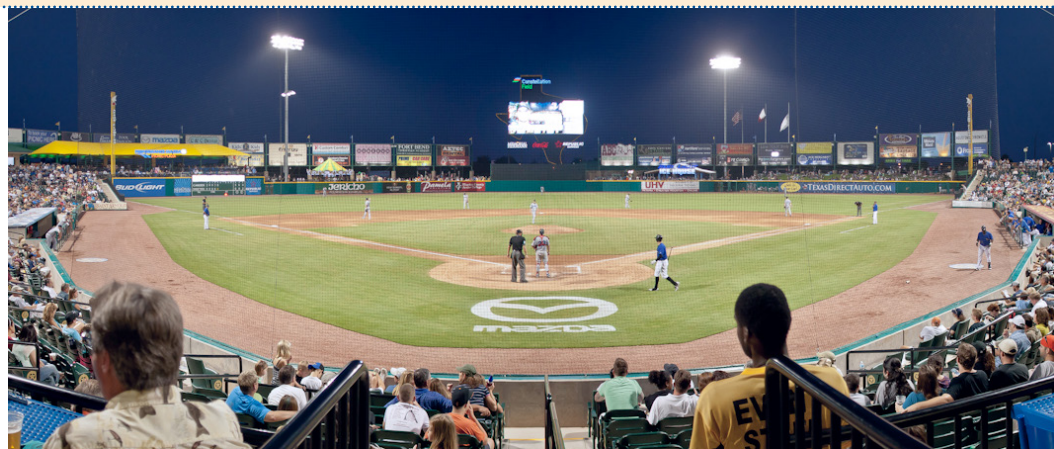
- **Housing Choices for a Successful City**
- **Mobility and Land Use**
- **Sustaining Vibrant Communities Through Redevelopment**

For more information, visit <http://www.sugarlandtx.gov/landuseplan>.

CONSTELLATION FIELD KNOCKS IT OUT OF THE PARK

After only two years of operation, the City of Sugar Land's Constellation Field has set new standards of quality for a minor league baseball stadium. Among its achievements are that Constellation Field beat projected attendance records for baseball and community events and won several *Houston Business Journal* Landmark Awards. The Sugar Land community has embraced Constellation Field and its home team—the Sugar Land Skeeters.

The two 2013 Landmark Awards from the *Houston Business Journal* were in the Community Impact and Hospitality/Entertainment categories. The Skeeters were the Atlantic League's Freedom Division champion for both the first and second half of the season and advanced to the Freedom Division playoffs. The Sugar Land Skeeters were not only the "winningest" team in full-season professional baseball in 2013 but also established an Atlantic League single-season win record with 95 wins.



The stadium was selected for Baseball America's 2013 Great Parks calendar, which was chosen by fans for amenities such as its unique scoreboard shaped like Texas.

Baseball attendance is above original projections and is the highest in the Atlantic League. With a combination of baseball and special events, the Skeeters organization has surpassed attendance expectations by more than 55 percent, based on the 2009 CSL International Ballpark Feasibility Study.

Constellation Field realized a significant increase in usage for special events in 2013 with more than 87,000 attendees for non-baseball events that include festivals, charity events, sports tournaments, company events and corporate meetings. With the addition of three full-time special events staff, the Skeeters have increased its special events attendance almost eightfold with 80,000 more people in attendance than in 2012.

"Constellation Field enhances Sugar Land's attractiveness as a destination

entertainment location and strengthens Sugar Land's overall economic development sustainability," said Mayor James Thompson. "Its great success benefits all our residents economically and culturally. Our community has embraced the stadium and the rest of the country is doing so, too."

The stadium is the result of many years of effort by the City of Sugar Land, its citizens and a public/private partnership between the City, Opening Day Partners and Johnson Development working to create destination attractions. No general fund dollars were spent to create the \$36-million stadium. Expenditures by visitors to the stadium generate sales and hotel occupancy taxes, that benefit the City and Sugar Land residents. The ballpark's success is serving as a catalyst for further development.

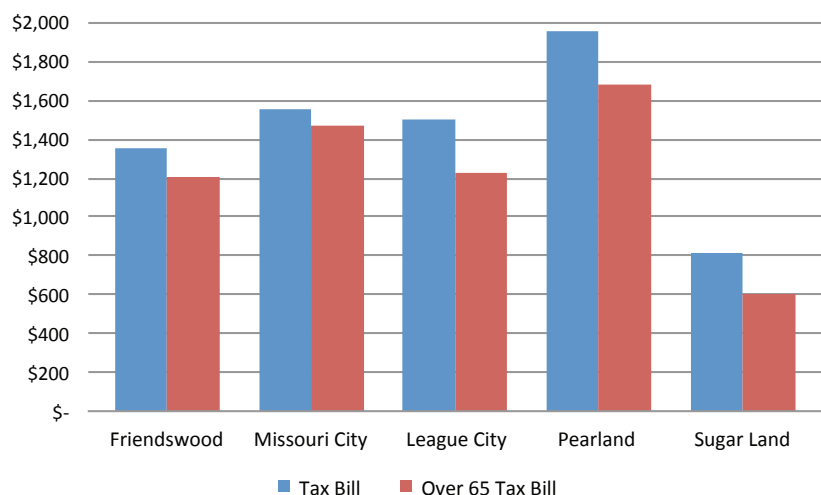
— S U R V E Y : — SUGAR LAND'S LOW TAX RATES

Sugar Land again has one of the lowest tax rates in the state according to a Texas Municipal League survey of 657 Texas cities. When comparing cities with populations greater than 25,000, Sugar Land's tax rate of 30.895 cents is the lowest in Texas. The survey also looked at outstanding tax-backed debt; as a percent of taxable value, Sugar Land's outstanding debt is below the average for Texas cities between 60,000 and 400,000 in population. The City's mix of high quality commercial and residential development provides a stable and growing tax base that contributes to the low tax rate.

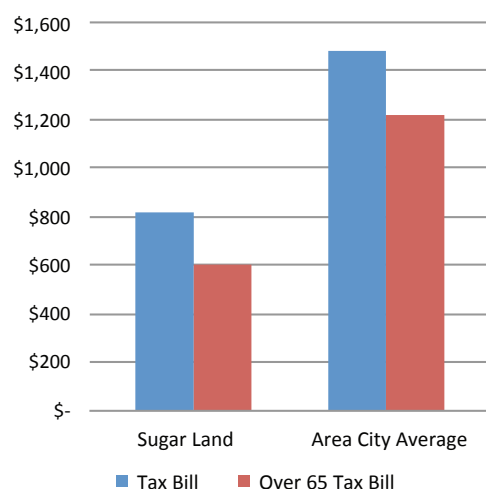
A comparison of city tax bills for Houston-area cities similar to Sugar Land shows that residents in Sugar Land pay significantly less in city taxes on a \$285,000 home than residents in League City, Friendswood, Missouri City or Pearland. The City's low tax rate, combined with optional homestead exemptions, means that Sugar Land tax bills are 52 percent of the average of the tax bills on homes of the same value in the other four cities. Tax bills for residents over the age of 65 are even lower, coming in at 43 percent of the average of the other cities' tax bills.

CITY	FRIENDSWOOD	MISSOURI CITY	LEAGUE CITY	PEARLAND	SUGAR LAND	AREA CITY AVERAGE
Population	38,000	66,846	88,188	93,305	84,511	
Tax Rate	59.14 cents	54.48 cents	59.7 cents	70.51 cents	30.89 cents	
Homestead Exemption	20 percent	None	12 percent	3 percent	7 percent	
Over-65 Exemption	\$25,000	\$15,000	\$45,000	\$40,000	\$70,000	
Avg Sugar Land Home Value	\$285,000	\$285,000	\$285,000	\$285,000	\$285,000	
Homestead Exemption	(\$57,000)	-	(\$34,200)	(\$7,125)	(\$19,950)	
Taxable Value	\$228,000	\$285,000	\$250,800	\$277,875	\$265,050	
Over-65 Taxable Value	\$203,000	\$270,000	\$205,800	\$237,875	\$195,050	
Tax Bill	\$1,348.39	\$1,552.68	\$1,497.28	\$1,959.30	\$818.87	\$1,478.25
Over-65 Tax Bill	\$1,200.54	\$1,470.96	\$1,228.63	\$1,677.26	\$602.61	\$1,219.46

CITY TAX BILL
Based on a \$285,000 Home



CITY TAX BILL
Based on a \$285,000 Home



2013

ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
ACTIVITIES

The Economic Development department had a productive year in 2013. The success of Sugar Land's business relocation efforts, openings and expansions reaffirm the City's status as one of the Houston region's favored employment centers and business destinations.

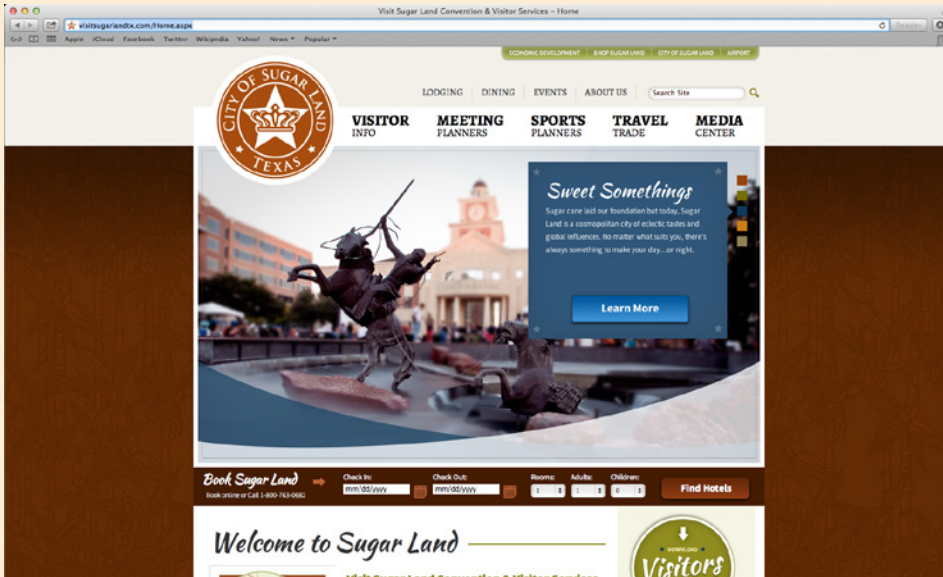
ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **UnitedHealthcare's** relocation to 193,000 square feet in the Sugar Creek on the Lake office building is expected to bring 1,000 to 1,200 jobs. Additionally, the former Unocal building has gone through extensive interior renovations, and the owner, PMRG, has invested more than \$13 million.
- **Cosentino North America** relocated its U.S. headquarters to 25,000 square feet in Sugar Land Town Square and will bring roughly 100 jobs.
- A development agreement with **ACE SL, LLC** was approved for a future performing arts center. The estimated \$83.6 million project will be funded by economic development sales tax, rent payments and hotel occupancy tax without any general fund tax dollars spent on the project.
- **Fluor Corporation** closed on a 50-acre site in Telfair at the southeast corner of U.S. Highway 59 and University Boulevard. More than \$165 million in new capital will be invested and 2,000 jobs retained when Fluor relocates from its current campus on Fluor Drive off of State Highway 6 by 2021.
- **Nalco Energy Services** purchased 18.5 acres on the north side of the company's campus within the Imperial development.

EXPANSIONS AND OPENINGS

- **Accredo Packaging** added a 145,000-square-foot building adjacent to an existing 100,000-square-foot building and invested a total of \$32.5 million in capital expenditures.
- **Costco Wholesale Corporation** opened in July 2013 with more than \$15 million in new capital investment and 150 jobs.
- **CVR Energy** expanded by approximately 16,000 square feet in Sugar Land Town Square.
- **Noble Drilling Services** finished its new training facility, Noble Excellence through Technology (NEXT), making a capital investment of \$7.5 million. The 29,146-square-foot facility provides state-of-the-art simulator and classroom-based training for its offshore oil exploration and development crews. The training facility will also generate about 400-500 visitors who will utilize at least 1,600 Sugar Land hotel rooms annually.
- **Petronash Americas, LLC** is expanding its production and assembly operations with a 15,000-square-foot facility, 20 new jobs and a \$10 million capital investment.
- **Team Industrial** relocated its headquarters to 27,000 square feet in the Granite Towers II building on Dairy Ashford and brought 80 jobs.
- **Texas Instruments, Inc.** broke ground on a new 160,000-square-foot office complex in Telfair at the southeast corner of U.S. Highway 59 and University Boulevard. This will add more than 375 jobs and have an impact of more than \$35 million in new capital investment.

VISIT SUGAR LAND TOURISM WEBSITE LIVE



The City launched a new tourism website for visitors to Sugar Land. A centralized resource for people wanting to explore the City, the **VisitSugarLandTX.com** website promotes Sugar Land as a destination for leisure, business, convention, sports and group tour travelers.

Visitors can book hotels, search for events, research restaurants and explore local attractions on this Sugar Land-focused site. The homepage highlights upcoming events and popular destinations such as the Houston Museum of Natural Science at Sugar Land, Techno Chaos and City parks. The site features area maps

as well as searchable directories of Sugar Land's events and tourism businesses.

VisitSugarLandTX.com has specialized sections catering to meeting, sports and travel trade planners seeking the ideal location for their next event. Planners can submit an online request for assistance with hotels, event facilities and other services.

Visit Sugar Land Convention and Visitor Services is part of the Office of Economic Development. The mission of Visit Sugar Land Convention and Visitor Services is to increase the number of visitors and their length of stay in Sugar Land in support of retail, service and hotel businesses and to ensure the success of Sugar Land's existing and planned destination activity centers. The program is completely funded by hotel occupancy tax funds.

For additional information on Visit Sugar Land Convention and Visitor Services, please contact Jessica Brown at **tourism@sugarlandtx.gov**.

AIRPORT RECEIVES UPGRADES

The Sugar Land Regional Airport underwent a number of renovations in 2013. Using grant money, major improvements were made to the runway pavement, lighting and shoulders. The extensive work required the total closure of the runway, so most of the runway upgrades were done at night to minimize the impact to airport operations.

The Sugar Land Regional Airport received a grant from the Texas Department of Transportation Aviation Division in the amount of \$6.8 million for various runway improvements. The rehabilitation of the runway pavement included concrete repair, joint repair and resealing, cleaning of the pavement and repainting the runway markings.

Another improvement was the replacement of the existing runway lighting with new high intensity runway lights. This portion of the project entailed the installation of new runway lights for the entire 8,000-foot runway. The new lights had to be installed adjacent to the existing lights, which had to be kept operational until the new system was completely installed.

The last part of the project was the addition of 20-foot wide stabilized shoulders to both sides of the runway. In addition to the improved maintenance and safety features, these shoulders also give many business jet customers a greater level of comfort, as many of their wingspans are greater than the current 100-foot width of runway and their wingtips actually hang over the edges of pavement.

AIRPORT ACQUIRES LAND

A \$6.5 million Texas Department of Transportation Aviation Division grant was used to purchase 84 acres of former prison land at the northwest corner of the intersection of State Highway 6 and U.S. Highway 90A. The airport will use a portion of the land to relocate a taxiway and improve drainage. The taxiway runs the length of the runway and must be relocated to meet FAA requirements for larger corporate aircraft. This will create the necessary distance to enable aircraft on the runway and taxiway to safely pass one another. Prison guard houses will be removed after an historic study has been completed. There are no other immediate plans for the land.



Residents who participated in a taste test on November 2008, returned to sample the final product after Sugar Land placed its new surface water treatment plant in service. Pictured (L-R) are Assistant City Manager Karen Daly; Councilmembers Steve R. Porter and Himesh Gandhi; resident Jim Kij; City Councilmember Harish Jajoo; residents John Novak, Yaffa Steubinger and Tom Coughlin; City Manager Allen Bogard; Senior Project Manager Michael Fox; and resident Jane Goodsill.

LANDMARK CIP PROJECT

SURFACE WATER NOW ON TAP

The City's new surface water treatment plant began delivering water to Sugar Land customers on Nov. 4. Completion of the two-year construction of the \$69 million project marks an important milestone in the City's long-range plans to meet growing water demands and comply with state mandates for groundwater reduction requirements.

"For more than a decade, the City has planned to convert a portion of its drinking water supply to surface water to meet the Fort Bend Subsidence District groundwater reduction requirements," said Assistant Director of Water Utilities Jessie Li. "The citizens of Sugar Land will be pleased with the high quality water produced."

To reduce the cost, the City and 17 entities inside the Sugar Land city limits and in its Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) formed a joint groundwater reduction group that provided funding for the surface water treatment plant construction. The facility is located east of Kempner High School on Voss Road.

Water produced by the treatment plant originates from the Brazos River. The plant can deliver 9 million gallons of water per day. Two raw water storage ponds can hold 27 million gallons. The raw water undergoes robust pre-treatment processes using state-of-the-art membrane filters and granular activated carbon filters. The treated surface water is delivered to two of the City's

existing groundwater plants for blending and distribution to customers through two large water lines.

"The water is treated to a very high quality; therefore, customers will not notice any taste difference. Our strict attention to quality assurance has netted a superior product that surpasses all federal and state drinking water standards," states Li. "The City of Sugar Land continues to plan and reassess the needs of the community and proactively address future challenges to guarantee a safe, reliable and high quality water supply for all of our citizens. We are ready to meet those challenges and maintain the high customer service standards our citizens have come to expect."

AVOID POLLUTING STORMWATER RUNOFF

As stormwater flows over driveways, lawns and sidewalks, it picks up debris, dirt, chemicals and other pollutants. Stormwater flows into ditches and storm drains that do not connect with a wastewater collection system or treatment plant. Anything entering a stormwater system is discharged untreated into lakes, streams or wetlands that are vital to nature and that we use for recreation.

Home improvements can contribute to stormwater pollution. Following environmentally friendly practices helps keep waterways clean and healthy for everyone.

- Schedule projects for dry weather.
- Keep all construction debris away from the street, gutter and storm drains.
- Exposed piles of construction material should not be stored on the street or sidewalk.
- Cover piles of dirt or mulch being used in landscaping projects.
- Always wash out paint brushes in a sink. Oil-based paint brushes should be cleaned with paint thinner. To avoid contaminating ground water, never dispose of paint or paint-related products on the ground, in a gutter or storm drain.
- Clean up spills immediately by using an absorbent material such as cat litter. Then sweep it up and dispose of it in the trash.
- Recycle or properly dispose of household products that contain chemicals, such as pesticides, paint, solvents, used motor oil and other auto fluids. To avoid polluting groundwater, do not pour these products onto the ground or into storm drains.
- Point pressure washers toward land that absorbs water or grassy surfaces to minimize surface runoff.
- Responsibly dispose of construction waste and hazardous materials.

For more information, visit
www.sugarlandtx.gov/stormwater.

RAGUS LAKE

Ragus Lake and Covington Woods subdivisions will be receiving \$4.4 million in drainage improvements over the next year. After a serious storm in January 2012, it was determined by City Council that a better drainage system was needed for the neighborhood. The work began in November and will be ongoing for nine months.

The scope of this project includes the installation of an 8-foot-by-5-foot box culvert along Ragus Lake Drive, Vickery Drive, Kathi Lynn Lane and Jo Ann Lane up to Baytree Drive. In addition, a 42-inch reinforced concrete pipe will be installed along Jo Ann Drive between Vinehill and Mary Sue Court. The planned improvements also include a 7-foot-by-4-foot box culvert along Vinehill Drive to Baytree and Maygrove in Covington Woods.

The improvements also include full pavement replacement for most sections of the appropriate roadways. The drainage improvements are intended to prevent the possibility of future street flooding.

A map of the area can be seen at **<http://www.sugarlandtx.gov/raguslakesmap>**. Construction updates will also be posted at **<http://www.sugarlandtx.gov/raguslakes>**. For more information, contact Ragus Lake project manager Idahosa Igbinoba at **281-275-2780** or email **cityengineer@sugarlandtx.gov**.

MASTER DRAINAGE PLAN AVAILABLE ONLINE

Eighteen citizens attended a public meeting on Nov. 6 to review draft updates to the Master Drainage Plan and provide feedback on drainage issues and proposed recommendations. Feedback from the public meeting and other participation opportunities will be considered for incorporation into the draft plan.

The Master Drainage Plan update will document drainage facility ownership and responsibilities, identify drainage improvements needed for flood protection and establish policy direction on detention pond maintenance. The plan will also identify strategies to achieve drainage-related goals found in the City's Comprehensive Plan, including that the City:

- is prepared for all hazards;
- has clean, well-maintained waterways;
- has well-designed, well-maintained infrastructure; and
- uses effective stormwater management to protect neighborhoods.

The draft document for the Master Drainage Plan update will be posted online in early 2014. Citizens are encouraged to visit **www.sugarlandtx.gov/drainage** to view the draft plan. For more information about Sugar Land's Master Drainage Plan or to provide feedback, call **(281) 275-2780** or email the City at **cityengineer@sugarlandtx.gov**.



With potential freezing weather, be sure to thoroughly protect your backflow prevention device, including the head.

PREPARE FOR A WATER-WISE WINTER

Water conservation is important year-round. Each season requires different precautions and actions to help cut water usage. In winter, over watering lawns and water leaks are the major concerns.

ADJUST IRRIGATION SYSTEMS

As the season changes, reprogram or turn off automated irrigation controllers to eliminate unnecessary water use. If not monitored, a clock-controlled irrigation schedule routinely applies water more frequently and for a longer duration than is necessary to maintain healthy lawns and landscapes. Automatic irrigation systems are most efficient when operated manually, adjusting your water use to the needs of the grass and plants.

LOCATE MAIN WATER SHUT-OFF VALVE

Locating and marking the location of a home's main water valve can save time, costly damage and charges for unnecessary water usage. The main valve

is located where the water line from the water meter enters the house. For most homes, it is located just below an outside faucet in front of or on the side of the house. In some homes, it may be in the utility room, kitchen or bathroom behind a small opening in the wall, and in others it may be in the garage. The valve usually has a round or oval handle.

WINTERIZE YOUR PIPES

Make sure that all outdoor spigots and exposed water lines are winterized. For irrigation system owners, it is important to protect the backflow prevention device. When freezing temperatures are expected, wrap pipes and the backflow device to keep them from freezing and bursting.

WATCH FOR LEAKS

Check for leaks in pipes, hoses, hose connections and faucets. Even a tiny leak can translate into thousands of gallons of water wasted over a short period of time. Repair or replace any leaking fixture or appliance.

RECYCLE COOKING OIL AND GREASE

This holiday season, many residents will find themselves needing to dispose of large amounts of cooking oil and grease. Putting oil or grease down a sink or other drain can clog pipes and cause damage to the sewer system. The City of Sugar Land operates a Cooking Oil Recycling Center at 111 Gillingham Lane. Residents are encouraged to utilize this convenient drop off location for their used liquid cooking oil and grease. The center is open Monday through Friday between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

REPORT WATER LEAKS

The City's Water Utilities customer service staff is available 24/7 to respond to emergencies. To report water leaks in streets or somewhere else in the City, call **281-275-2450**.

FREE IRRIGATION SYSTEM EVALUATIONS

The City's water conservation program strives to provide educational resources for using less water. As part of these conservation efforts, the City has contracted with local licensed irrigation specialists from the Water Irrigation System Evaluation (W.I.S.E.) Guys program. During a W.I.S.E. Guys evaluation, a specialist examines an irrigation system, compiles a list of repairs or changes that will improve the system's water efficiency and recommends controller settings and adjustments that will reduce water waste. Visit the City's website to learn more or register for a W.I.S.E. Guys evaluation at **www.sugarlandtx.gov/wiseguys**.



HOLIDAY SERVICE SCHEDULE

There will be no trash, recycling or bulky waste collections on Christmas or New Year's Day. Residents will receive their regular service the following day. In addition, the City will offer bulky waste collection following the Christmas and New Year's holidays.

Christmas Day, Wednesday, Dec. 25

Wednesday's collection will occur on Thursday.

All remaining days are regular collection.

Additional bulky waste collections are detailed in the table below.

New Year's Day, Wednesday, Jan. 1

Wednesday's collection will occur on Thursday.

All remaining days are regular collection.

Additional bulky waste collections are detailed in the table below.

December Schedule

Regular Bulky Waste Service Day	Christmas Bulky Waste Service Day	New Year's Bulky Waste Service Day
1st Wednesday	Friday, Dec. 27	Thursday, Jan. 2
2nd Wednesday	Saturday, Dec. 28	Friday, Jan. 3
3rd Wednesday	Saturday, Dec. 28	Saturday, Jan. 4
4th Wednesday	Thursday, Dec. 26	Saturday, Jan. 4

RECYCLE CHRISTMAS TREES

Christmas trees will be collected on the regular weekly green waste collection day. Ornaments, tinsel and lights must be removed. The trees will be turned into mulch or compost at a composting facility.



HAZARDOUS WASTE AND E-WASTE COLLECTION

Curbside collection of household hazardous waste and e-waste is coming in January 2014!

Visit www.sugarlandtx.gov/solidwaste for details on acceptable items and how to schedule a collection.

KEEPING WILDLIFE OUTSIDE

With cooler temperatures outside, wildlife will be searching for a warm, dry place to nest. Raccoons, skunks, squirrels and other animals may seek shelter in chimneys, attics or under porches or decks. Some tips to prevent uninvited guests follow:

- An open chimney is warm and resembles a hollow tree. Keep animals out by installing a secure chimney cap.
- Rotten or loose wooden boards make it easy for animals to get into overhangs and attics.
- Vents in the attic should be covered with wire mesh to keep out larger mammals like raccoons.
- Check the foundation for openings and signs of animal activity where pipes, vents and cables exit the house. Look for gaps at places where different types of building materials are joined together.

There are several area companies that can help prevent animals from entering houses. For wildlife found inside houses, call Animal Services at **281-275-2364** for information on trapping or call a professional for removal.



DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

For more information on these and other development projects, please visit www.sugarlandtx.gov/development.

TELFAIR

Telfair is located to the north and south of U.S. Highway 59 near University Boulevard and consists of more than 2,000 acres. Current development and construction on commercial projects are highlighted below.

- Construction continues on the Texas Instruments campus on the south side of U.S. Highway 59 at University Boulevard and Lexington Boulevard
- Construction on the Telfair Lofts residential project at Branford Place is ongoing.
- Plans are being approved east of the Costco site for medical offices.

RIVERSTONE

Riverstone is located on 2,710 acres in the southeast corner of the City's Extra Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ), an area outside the City's corporate limits that is available for annexation in the future.

- Platting of new single-family neighborhoods is ongoing.
- Commercial plans for a Timewise Food Store, CVS Pharmacy and Retreat at Riverstone residential community is proceeding.
- A recreation center on north side of University Boulevard is under construction.

IMPERIAL

The Imperial development contains 716 acres located north of U.S. Highway 90A and east of State Highway 6 and includes the former Imperial Sugar refinery.

- Subdivision layouts have been authorized for two single-family neighborhood areas and townhome lots off of Imperial Boulevard and Stadium Way. These are called Quiet Cove and Silent Manor.
- Construction is ongoing for the Ballpark Lofts project for residential units directly adjacent to Constellation Field.



REDUCE RISKS WITH **FLOOD INSURANCE**

Flooding can happen anywhere, but certain areas are especially prone to serious flooding. It is important for residents to know if their home is located in an area at risk of flooding. Even homes in low-risk areas can flood during severe weather. Flood zone designations can be found on Fort Bend County's website at <http://bit.ly/18vKgX9>.

Beginning April 2014, the Federal Emergency Management Agency will have an updated flood insurance rate map of Sugar Land on the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) website. The flood maps will show the locations of high-risk, moderate-to-low-risk and undetermined-risk areas. These new maps will be used to determine flood insurance premiums for properties based on their risk zones.

Since standard homeowners insurance does not cover flooding, it is important to have protection from floods associated with hurricanes, tropical storms, heavy rains and other conditions. Because the City of Sugar Land participates in the NFIP, flood insurance through this program is available to Sugar Land homeowners, renters and business owners. Information about the insurance, flood preparation and recovery can be found on the NFIP website (www.floodsmart.gov).

Homeowners, realtors, lenders and insurance agents can learn more by contacting City staff at **281-275-2780** or cityengineer@sugarlandtx.gov.

MAY YOUR HOLIDAYS BE SAFE

The holidays are a time for family, food and cheer. Unfortunately, the festivities can go up in flames if precautions are not taken. The Sugar Land Fire Department offers a few fire prevention tips to keep the holiday season merry and safe.

HOLIDAY LIGHTS

All decorative lights, indoor and outdoor, should be approved by an independent testing laboratory. Do not use any lights that have damaged cords or sockets. Never use indoor lights outside.

Do not overload outlets or run extension cords under carpets, across doorways, on or under heaters or pinched behind furniture. Unplug all decorative lights before leaving home or going to bed. Never use electric lights on a metal Christmas tree.

THE TREE

After Christmas, dispose of the tree as soon as possible. Dried out trees are a fire hazard. Place the tree at the curb on the green waste curbside pickup day before it gets too dry.

CANDLES

Keep candles away from trees, boughs, curtains or any potentially flammable item. Never put candles in windows or near exits. Never leave candles burning, unattended or within the reach of small children. Extinguish candles—wetting the wicks—before leaving a room or going to bed.

TOYS AND GIFTS

Be especially careful when choosing toys for infants or small children. Be sure anything given to them is too big to get caught in their throat, nose or ears. Avoid toys with small parts that can be pulled or broken. When giving toys to several children in one family, consider their age differences and the chances that younger children will want to play with the older kids' toys.

PLANTS

Children and pets may think that holiday plants look good enough to eat, but many plants can cause severe stomach problems. Plants to watch out for include poinsettias, mistletoe, holly berries, Jerusalem cherry and amaryllis. Keep all of these plants out of children's and pets' reach. For questions regarding poisonous plants, please call Poison Control at **1-800-222-1222**.

FIREPLACES

Do not try to dispose of evergreens or wreaths in a fireplace or wood stove. The fire will likely flare out of control and send flames and smoke into the room. Also, do not burn wrapping paper in the fireplace because it often contains metallic materials that can be toxic if burned.

For more about holiday safety tips, contact Capt. Trent Herrod at **281-275-2859**.

NEW YEAR'S EVE ON THE SQUARE

TUESDAY, DEC. 31, 7 p.m.–1 a.m.



Ring in 2014 surrounded by friends and family for New Year's Eve! This fun-filled night will have live music, performances, state-of-the-art fireworks and a 3D show at midnight.

The evening will be divided into two special celebrations to ensure that all ages get a chance to enjoy the night:

- Children's Celebration: 7-9 p.m.
- Adults' Celebration: 9:30 p.m.–1 a.m.

Admission and a shuttle service from Mercer Stadium are free. Beer and wine will be available for purchase to responsible adults (21 years and older) starting at 9:30 p.m.



For more information, please go to www.sugarlandtx.gov/nye.

IMPERIAL PARK RECREATION CENTER

234 Matlage Way
Sugar Land, TX 77478



IPRC CLASSES

With classes ranging from Aikido to Zumba, the IPRC offers numerous classes for adults and youth. Visit www.imperialparkrecreationcenter.org to see the most recent playbook, the open play calendar and the leisure class schedule. All classes require a facility usage card that is \$10 per year for Sugar Land residents and \$46 per year for non-residents. For more information, call **281-275-2885**.

ADULT LEISURE

Jazzercise
Yoga for Everybody
Line Dance
Taekwondo
Aikido
Tai Chi

Karate

Bridge

Restore the Core

Zumba

YOUTH LEISURE

Taekwondo

Karate

YOUTH SPORTS

Fort Bend Tennis

Soccer Tots

AND MORE!

For additional IPRC classes, see the IPRC playbook online.

SPRING BREAK CAMP

Kids ages five to 13 are invited to come experience a week of fun and excitement. Camp activities will include sports, teambuilding games, arts and crafts and much more.

Monday-Friday, March 10-14, 8 a.m.–2 p.m.

\$100 per child (resident) | \$125 per child (non-resident)

Resident registration: Jan. 6 | Non-resident registration: Jan. 13

MEN'S BASKETBALL LEAGUE

The men's basketball league will have two divisions. Games will be on Tuesday and Thursday nights starting at 6 p.m. A single-elimination playoff will end the season. More on the City's athletic leagues can be found at www.teamsideline.com/sugarland.

Early Registration: Jan. 6-31 for \$300

Late Registration: Feb. 1-7 for \$325



HOUSTON ROCKETS MINI-DRIBBLERS

Sundays, Jan. 26–March 2, 1-3 p.m. | Cost: \$105

This six-week program for kids ages five to 10 is designed to introduce and teach the fundamentals of basketball in a unique, fun and exciting way.

HOUSTON ROCKETS SPRING BREAK CLINIC

Monday-Wednesday, March 10-12, 9 a.m.–noon | Cost: \$105

The Houston Rockets and the National Basketball Academy Spring Break Clinic is designed for boys and girls ages five to 16 who are looking to improve their basketball skills. Throughout the clinic, participants will receive personal instruction in all areas of the game including dribbling, shooting, passing, blocking and defense while learning important lessons such as good sportsmanship and the team concept.

Register online at www.thebasketballacademy.com, or call **832-392-0749** for more information.

SPECIAL EVENTS



CULTURAL KITE FESTIVAL

Saturday, March 1, 10 a.m.–3 p.m.
www.sugarlandtx.gov/kitefest

Sugar Land Memorial Park
 15300 University Blvd
 Sugar Land, TX 77479



Kites of all shapes and sizes will fill the air at the fifth annual Cultural Kite Festival. Activities and entertainment will include kite competitions for all ages, kite flying lessons and cultural performances. Children will be able to create their own kites at a kite-making workshop that will be ongoing throughout the event.

Category	Registration Time	Contest Time	Winners Announced
Largest Kite	10 a.m.	10:30 a.m.	11 a.m.
Smallest Kite	11 a.m.	11:30 a.m.	Noon
Most Unusual/Unique Kite	Noon	12:30 p.m.	1 p.m.
Highest Flying Kite	1 p.m.	1:30 p.m.	2 p.m.
Most Colorful Kite	2 p.m.	2:30 p.m.	3 p.m.

There is no cost to enter the kite competitions. Register at the City's blue tent at the times listed below. First-, second- and third-place trophies will be awarded for each category.

Food and refreshments will be available for purchase. Limited parking will be available at Sugar Land Memorial Park and at the University of Houston Sugar Land campus (also located on University Boulevard), where free event shuttle buses will be on hand.

SAVE THE DATE

Saturday, April 12
 Eggstravaganza



T.E. HARMAN CENTER

226 Matlage Way
 Sugar Land, TX 77478



For more information on senior activities and registration, call **281-275-2893** or email seniors@sugarlandtx.gov. Monthly calendars are available at www.sugarlandtx.gov/teharman.

SWEETHEART VALENTINE'S DANCE

It will be a night to remember.

Thursday, Feb. 13, 5-8 p.m.

Cost: \$5, members; \$10, non-members

Register by Friday, Feb. 7.

DINNER & DOMINOES

Bring a friend, enjoy a meal and play those tiles!

Monday, Feb. 17, 5-8 p.m.

Cost: \$1, members; \$6, non-members

Register by Friday, Feb. 7.

DELTA DOWNS CASINO

Take a road trip to Vinton, La., on the border of Texas and Louisiana, for blackjack, craps and a good time. Meals are not included in the cost of the trip. Space is limited to 50 participants.

Thursday, Feb. 27, 7 a.m.-7 p.m.

Cost: \$30, members

\$35, non-members

Register by Friday, Feb. 14.

POSTAL CUSTOMER

CALENDAR

	Date	Event	Time	Location
DEC	25	Christmas <i>City offices closed No solid waste collection</i>		
	26	Wednesday's solid waste collection		
	31	New Year's on the Square	7 p.m.– 1 a.m.	SL Town Square
JAN	1	New Year's Day <i>City offices closed No solid waste collection</i>		
	2	Wednesday's solid waste collection		
	15, 29	Land Use Forum Series	6 p.m.	City Hall
	7, 21, 28	City Council	5:30 p.m.	City Hall
	14, 23	Planning & Zoning	6:30 p.m.	City Hall
	20	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day <i>City offices closed Regular solid waste collection</i>		
	24	State of the City Event	8 a.m.	SL Mariott
FEB	4, 18, 25	City Council	5:30 p.m.	City Hall
	11, 27	Planning & Zoning	6:30 p.m.	City Hall
	12	Land Use Forum	6 p.m.	City Hall
	13	Senior Valentine's Dance	5–8 p.m.	T.E. Harman Center

save the date

CULTURAL KITE FESTIVAL
March 1

EGGSTRAVAGANZA
April 12

Visit www.sugarlandtx.gov to confirm City events.
Visit www.visitsugarlandtx.com for convention and visitor services.
For Sugar Land Town Center events, visit www.sugarlandtownsquare.com.
For updates on legal notices, bids, public hearings and more, visit www.sugarlandtx.gov/legalnotices.

KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOR: CULTURAL KITE FESTIVAL



Not only is the Cultural Kite Festival a fun excuse to spend time outside, but it is also deeply rooted in the history of many of Sugar Land's multi-cultural communities.

Originally invented in China with silk and bamboo, kites were flown in an effort to avoid bad luck. Kite flying remains very popular there today, and modern kites are colorful with designs ranging from animals to mythology to flowers. Among the most popular are "centipede kites" featuring centipede bodies with dragon heads—a common site at the Weifang International Kite Festival held each April in Weifang, a city in the Shandong Province known as the kite capital of the world.

Additionally, among the festivals throughout India each year is a kite flying one known as Makar Sankranti. Celebrated for thousands of years to mark the beginning of the harvest season, it is held on Jan. 14—a public holiday. Whether rich or poor, people of all ages participate with kites of various materials, shapes and colors, and the fun comes when the "kite fighting" begins and kites are maneuvered to cut others' lines—meaning that manufacturing strong thread is a big business during kite season! Participants also enjoy running to catch the falling kites, as well as flying them with candle lanterns at night.

Kite flying is also popular in Pakistan—especially during spring celebrations—and Vietnam, where kites are often crafted in a way to create different sounds and music. Additionally, the sport extends into many more countries and regions—from Afghanistan to Europe to Polynesia to South America and even Japan.

We would love for you to take part in next year's event on March 1 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Sugar Land Memorial Park. Not only will you get to experience flying a kite, you'll get to experience the richness of our diversity!

"Know Your Neighbor" is written by members of the City's Multi-Cultural Advisory Team. These columns are intended to help residents get to know the customs and traditions of their neighbors.